
Communication 2511 – Visual Communication Design Summer 2016 – TR 12:25-3:35pm – 3176 Derby Hall

Instructor: Kathryn “Katie” Cooper
Office: 3045F Derby Hall
Email: cooper.2114@osu.edu
Office Hours: By appointment

DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

The purpose of this course is to combine visual communication theory and application in order to enhance your visual literacy and practical skills. Throughout the semester, we will study visual communication principles from a variety of perspectives and put them into action using industry-standard design software. This course is ideally suited for those who might not necessarily want to become designers but hope to pursue professional careers that work closely with visual and creative elements (e.g., advertising manager, communications director, etc.).

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Understand the principles of visual design
- Think critically about the media, visual design, and production
- Master the basics of Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Dreamweaver
- Apply the fundamentals of web design to create your own website

PREREQUISITES

This course is technology-driven and fast-paced. In order to be successful in this class, you must:

- **Have working knowledge of Windows and/or Mac operating systems.** You should know how to create a folder, save a file to a folder, copy a folder or file, move files from the hard drive to a flash drive, rename files, create compressed zip folders (see instructions on Carmen), etc.
- **Have access to the Internet.** Many of the elements of the course are presented online and submitted online, so it is essential that you have access to the Internet via campus or personal computers.
- **Have a working OSU email address and access to Carmen.** Throughout the semester, expect to receive emails from me regarding the course. As such, it is important that you check your OSU email account regularly and make sure that course emails are not going to your junk folder. All assignments will be submitted online through Carmen.
- **Be willing and able to independently troubleshoot.** You will be learning new software. Using online tutorials and other resources (e.g., Google, YouTube, Digital Union labs, etc.) is not only suggested, it is highly encouraged. You should become comfortable with proactively seeking out solutions to challenges that arise before asking for help.

TEXTBOOKS AND EQUIPMENT

Required Textbooks

The textbooks for this course are available free online through the OSU Library and Safari Tech Books Online. If you prefer a print copy, feel free to purchase one, though this is not necessary for successful completion of the course.

The links below should take you directly to the textbooks. You will need to log in to your OSU account. If you are on an off-campus computer and the links below do not work, please see more detailed instructions for accessing the textbooks in a document on Carmen titled "Accessing Course Textbooks."

Textbooks:

- Adobe Photoshop CC Classroom in a Book® (2015 release)
<http://proquest.safaribooksonline.com.proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu/book/photo-and-graphic-manipulation/9780134306926>
- Adobe Dreamweaver CC Classroom in a Book® (2015 release)
<http://proquest.safaribooksonline.com.proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu/book/web-design-and-development/9780134308760>
- Williams, R. (2014). *The non-designer's design book* (4th ed.). San Francisco, CA: Peachpit Press.
<http://proquest.safaribooksonline.com.proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu/book/graphic-design/9780133966350>
- **Optional:** Lidwell, W., Holden, K., & Butler, J. (2010). *Universal principles of design: 125 ways to enhance usability, influence perception, increase appeal, make better design decisions, and teach through design*. Beverly, MA: Rockport Publishers.
<http://proquest.safaribooksonline.com.proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu/book/-/9781592535873>

Required Flash Drives

You must have at least one USB flash drive, which must be brought to class each day. The flash drive must be PC/Mac compatible with a capacity of at least 1 GB. Always make sure to frequently save and back up your work.

One of the few guarantees in life is a corrupted drive. Therefore, you should always have multiple backup copies of your work. If you lose your flash drive or it becomes corrupted and you do not have a backup copy, you will not get any credit for lost work.

SOFTWARE AND LAB ACCESS

For this class, we'll use Photoshop CC and other programs in the Adobe Creative Suite. It is your responsibility to secure access these programs in order to complete assignments outside of class time. There are many ways to use the software on your own and the syllabus provides you with due dates in advance; therefore not being able to access the programs is not an acceptable justification for not completing your work.

Lab Options

The Digital Union has four lab options with Adobe Creative Suite (<http://odee.osu.edu/digital-union>). Their locations and hours are listed below.

Note: Digital Union labs are closed on university holidays and on Sundays preceding Monday holidays.

Locations:

- Enarson Classrooms 012
- Hagerty Hall 171A
- Prior Hall 460A
- Stillman Hall 145

Hours:

- Monday-Friday: 9am-5pm
- Saturday-Sunday: Closed

Downloading Software

If you have your own computer and a compatible operating system, you have two options if you wish to download the software instead of using the labs:

- Adobe offers a Creative Cloud membership for students. You can acquire the software at a discounted student price. Go to <https://creative.adobe.com/plans> to see available plans.
- You can download a free trial version of Creative Cloud from <http://www.adobe.com/downloads.edu.html>. However, **the trial period lasts only 30 days**. I recommend that you download the free trial version towards the end of the semester to help avoid the end-of-semester rush at the labs. Downloading the software after Week 2 should give you access to the software for the rest of the semester.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Graded Activities

<i>Attendance and Participation</i>	80 points
<i>Photoshop and Dreamweaver Lessons</i>	
PS 1-9, DW 1-3 (15 points each)	180 points
<i>Design Assignments</i>	
About	100 points
Case Study	100 points
Home Page and Logo	200 points
Wireframe	100 points
Website	100 points
<i>Exams</i>	
Midterm	70 points
Final	70 points
TOTAL	1000 points

Grading Scale Distribution (OSU Standard Scheme)

A	930-1000	B	830-869	C	730-769	D	600-669
A-	900-929	B-	800-829	C-	700-729	E	Under 600
B+	870-899	C+	770-799	D+	670-699		

Attendance and Participation

This class is a workshop that is based on a philosophy of collaborative learning. The class is driven by a set of assignments in sequential order, with increasing levels of challenge. When students frequently miss classes or fall behind on assignments, it disrupts the progress of the whole class.

Participation is required. While sickness and unexpected emergencies will arise from time to time, you should expect that if you are regularly absent your grade will be negatively affected. It is important that you do the class readings **before** coming to class so that you are prepared to discuss them. Students who delay reading the course content until after lecture (or worse yet, until just before the exam) will not do well in this course, so please keep up with the scheduled readings for your own good.

The first, minimum component of this portion of your grade is class attendance. I will take attendance daily, beginning the second week of classes. You must be present at the time attendance is taken to receive credit. You will receive points for each class you attend; consequently you will lose points for not attending class. You may miss **one** class for any reason (no excuse note required) without penalty.

Routine events, such as conflict between class hours and internship/working hours, will not count as excused absences. Do not schedule work, internships, or classes during COMM 2511 class time.

To earn an "A" for participation, you should (1) be prompt and attend all classes, (2) consistently participate in class discussion and activities, (3) display an understanding of the course readings, and (4) demonstrate an ability to creatively apply course concepts.

Class attendance and participation together will be worth 8% of your final grade.

Photoshop and Dreamweaver Lessons

Throughout the semester, you will independently complete several lessons to learn how to use Adobe Photoshop and Dreamweaver. The lessons correspond with each textbook chapter to help you put the techniques you learn into practice. You can download the lesson files from Carmen or by following the instructions in the textbooks. For each lesson, you will submit a final version of the file to Carmen. You will be given some class time to work on the lessons, but expect to devote additional time outside of class to complete them. **Note:** Sections labeled "Extra Credit" in the textbook lessons do not count for extra credit in the course.

Each lesson is worth 15 points, for a total of 18% of your final grade.

Design Assignments

Several design assignments will help you make progress in developing your understanding of visual principles in graphic and website design. Over the course of the semester, you will design a website consisting of five pages. The design assignments will help guide you through this process. All assignments must be submitted to Carmen in an appropriate and readable file. **If your file is unreadable by my computer, it will receive a 0.** If you have doubts, email me the file ahead of time and ask me to review it in order to ensure that it works.

Assignments will be evaluated along various dimensions. Scores will be based on creativity, design excellence, analytical thinking, attention to detail, and polished writing. Here are some of the general criteria that will be used to grade assignments:

- Connecting your work to readings and class discussion
- Demonstrating technical competence with Photoshop and Dreamweaver
- Understanding of the visual literacy principles presented in readings and lecture
- Ability to develop creative graphic themes, designs, and artwork
- Ability to critically evaluate visual communication, including self-critique
- Quality writing that expresses clear thinking
- Writing that is free of typos, spelling errors, and poor grammar.

Sometimes you will be asked to look at one another's work and offer suggestions and critiques. You are expected to be courteous and constructive with your critiques and comments.

Point values for the design assignments vary (see above). In total, the design assignments are worth 60% of your final grade.

Exams

You will take two exams through Carmen that will require recall and application of material covered in class, including the course readings, lectures, and technical terms related to the software. In-class review sessions will precede each exam. The final exam is not cumulative – it will only cover material from the second half of the course. Make-up or early exams will **not** be permitted.

Each exam is worth 70 points for a total 14% of your final grade.

COURSE POLICIES

Technology Use and General Politeness

This is a technology-heavy course, but it must be used responsibly. You need to stay focused on class discussion and material as a courtesy to other students and your instructor, and to do well in the class. **Do not check your email or use the computers for tasks not related to the course during lecture or while other students are speaking.** Violation of this policy will result in a 10 point

reduction of your final grade per incident (taken from your Attendance and Participation grade).

Additionally, noisy cell phones as well as text messaging at your desk can be a distraction to the instructor and your fellow students and **must be turned off and out of sight when the instructor or another student is speaking**. Violation of this policy will result in a 10 point reduction of your final grade per incident (taken from your Attendance and Participation grade).

This is a collaborative learning-based course. To maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning, please be courteous to other members of the class and treat them with the dignity and respect that you expect from others.

Late Work

As adults, you are expected to meet assigned deadlines. **No credit will be given for any lesson or assignment submitted after its deadline**. You are welcome to work ahead and submit assignments early (especially Photoshop and Dreamweaver lessons).

Computer/technology problems will **not** be considered an acceptable justification for late work. If you are having difficulties with Carmen, you may email me your assignment **before** the deadline to receive credit.

You are expected to arrive to class on time and to attend class for the duration of each meeting. Failure to do so will result in a reduction of your Attendance and Participation grade.

Naming Files

Unless otherwise stated, you **must** name your files in the following format. Failure to do so will result in a 5 point grade reduction for your assignment.

Format: Lastname_Firstname_Assignmentname.filetype

Example: Cooper_Kaatie_PS1.psd

A General Note

Graduating seniors (and other students) who “need” this course to graduate should work especially hard to ensure that they will pass this class (a C- or higher is required for Communication and Journalism majors). There will **not** be opportunities for you to re-take exams or re-complete assignments in order to raise your grade. It is your responsibility to ensure that you receive a passing final grade by working diligently and responsibly throughout the semester. No exceptions will be made.

Academic Misconduct

"It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term 'academic misconduct' includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/info_for_students/csc.asp)."

Diversity Statement

"The School of Communication at The Ohio State University embraces and maintains an environment that respects diverse traditions, heritages, experiences, and people. Our commitment to diversity moves beyond mere tolerance to recognizing, understanding, and welcoming the contributions of diverse groups and the value group members possess as individuals. In our School, the faculty, students, and staff are dedicated to building a tradition of diversity with principles of equal opportunity, personal respect, and the intellectual interests of those who comprise diverse cultures."

Disability Services

If you have a documented disability, please register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations, so they may be implemented in a timely fashion. If you have any questions about this process, please contact Disability Services at 614-292-3307 or slds@osu.edu.

Readings and Course Schedule

Under each class day is a list of what you need to read **BEFORE** the beginning of class that day. All readings for “Lidwell et al.” are optional. Assigned readings are in regular font, lessons, assignments, and exams are in **bold**.

Thursday, May 12 – Course introduction, Visual language and communication, Introduction to Photoshop

- **Photoshop Lesson 1 due by 9:00pm**
 - Williams Chapter 1 – Introduction (optional)
-

Tuesday, May 17 – Design process, Web anatomy and grid

- **Photoshop Lessons 2 and 3 due by 9:00pm**
- Williams Chapter 2 – Proximity
- Williams Chapter 3 – Alignment
- Williams Chapter 4 - Repetition

Thursday, May 19 – Balance and emphasis, Better design decisions

- **Photoshop Lesson 4 due by 9:00pm**
- Williams Chapter 5 – Contrast
- Williams Chapter 6 – Review of the four design principles
- Lidwell et al. – Topics under “How can I make better design decisions?” (p. 9)

About Assignment due by 11:59pm Friday, May 20

Tuesday, May 24 – Influencing perception, Color, Typography

- **Photoshop Lessons 5 and 6 due by 9:00pm**
- Williams Chapter 7 – Color
- Williams Chapter 9 – The essentials of typography
- Williams Chapter 10 – Type (& life)
- Lidwell et al. – Topics under “How can I influence the way a design is perceived?” (p. 8)

Thursday, May 26 – Typography (continued), Midterm review

- **Photoshop Lesson 7 due by 9:00pm**
- Williams Chapter 11 – Categories of type
- Williams Chapter 12 – Type contrasts

Case Study Assignment due by 11:59pm Friday, May 27

Midterm Exam due by 2:00pm Monday, May 30

Tuesday, May 31 – Unity and gestalt, Logo design,

- **Photoshop Lesson 8 due by 9:00pm**
- “65 expert logo design tips” (on Carmen)
- Lidwell et al. – Topics under “How can I help people learn from a design?” (p. 8)

Thursday, June 2 – Visual analysis, Helping people learn

- **Photoshop Lesson 9 due by 9:00pm**
- Lidwell et al. – Topics under “How can I help people learn from a design?” (p. 8)

Home Page and Logo Assignment due by 11:59pm Friday, June 4

Tuesday, June 7 – Enhancing usability, Home Page and Logo Assignment critique

- **Dreamweaver Lessons 1 and 2 Quiz due by 9:00pm**
- Lidwell et al. – Topics under “How can I enhance the usability of a design?” (p. 8)

Thursday, June 9 – Web tutorial

- **Dreamweaver Lesson 3 due by 9:00pm**

Wireframe Assignment due by 11:59pm on Friday, June 10

Tuesday, June 14 – Web tutorial (continued), Increasing appeal

- Lidwell et al. – Topics under “How can I increase the appeal of a design?” (p. 9)

Thursday, June 16 – Moving images, Wireframe Assignment critique, Final Exam review

Website Assignment due by 11:59pm Friday, June 17

Final Exam due by 2:00pm Monday, June 20
